



## SCHOOL UPDATES

### EXTENDED LEARNING WEEK:

Next week, pupils across school will be taking part in our 2<sup>nd</sup> Extended Learning Week of the year. The focus of this week, during which we collapse our foundation curriculum to focus on a certain aspect of the curriculum, is Science. More specifically, the pupils will be introduced to a natural history project that we will be taking part in as a school in conjunction with the Great North Museum leading up to the visit of 'Dippy' the Diplodocus to the North East in May 2019. As we begin our participation in the project, pupils will undertake a 'Bioblitz' of our school grounds, to investigate and explore nature on our doorstep; we'll even be setting some trap cameras around school to see if we can capture some footage of a variety of animals in residence on our grounds. As ever, we'll share our findings via our school Twitter feed (@whickhamstmarys).

**Please note, we're asking all pupils in school to have a pair of wellies/outdoor shoes (named and in a bag) in school each day next week, so that we may complete our Bioblitz tasks.**

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES:

A huge thank you to everyone who donated shoeboxes for this year's Operation Christmas Child appeal. 62 boxes have now been sent from St Mary's, and will be delivered to vulnerable children this Christmas.

### ATTENDANCE:

YEAR GROUP	AUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	OVERALL (%)
RECEPTION	4.7	0	95.3
YEAR 1	1.4	0	98.6
YEAR 2	6	4.7	89.3
YEAR 3	0	3.3	96.7
YEAR 4	1.3	0	98.7
YEAR 5	1.7	0	98.3
YEAR 6	0	0	100
AVERAGE	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>96.7</b>

Well done to Y6 for attaining 100% attendance this week!

### SPORTS UPDATE:

A huge well done to both the school football team, and girls' football team, for their valiant efforts taking part in the National League Trophy Under 11s competition hosted at Gateshead Stadium. Both teams were commended for their excellent football, and although we fell painfully short from qualification, it was a wonderful experience for all involved. We wish the qualifying schools every success in the next round of competition.

### TRAVELLING CRIBS:

Our Travelling Crib project has already begun, during which every family in school will have the opportunity to bring home a class crib in order to share in the wonder of the Nativity during this season of preparation.

Please remember to return the travelling cribs intact and complete to school the very next school day, to ensure that all families may share in the special journey during the lead-up to Christmas. Please try to take and send photos of your experiences in to class, along with any prayers or responses written by the children on the templates provided, to be compiled within a class portfolio of the project.

### REMINDERS

#### WINTER UNIFORM:

Please remember that all pupils should now be bringing a coat in to school each day, and it is recommended that pupils also bring a hat, gloves and a scarf as temperatures fall. Pupils must wear sensible, black school shoes (no trainers or boots); if – for whatever reason – pupils are unable to wear their school shoes for a short period of time, parents/carers must contact the school directly (by phone, in person, or by writing) to explain the reasons for this. Boots may be worn to/from school and during playtimes, but shoes must be sent in to be worn in school. Thank you.

#### FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S:

Christmas Raffle - It's that time of year again when we start organising and collecting prizes for the Friends of St Mary's Christmas Raffle. In previous years we have been very fortunate to have received some extremely generous raffle prizes from the St Mary's community including gifts, vouchers and tickets for events. If either you or your employer is able to donate a prize towards the raffle, please contact the school office or a member of the Friends. Thank you.

"Thirsty Thursday" - The Friends will be selling yummy hot chocolate in the school yard each Thursday from 3pm to help ward off the winter blues.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING:

Please come along to 9:30am Mass at St Mary's Church this Sunday (25.11.18) to join in our celebration of Youth Sunday on the feast of Christ the King. Pupils should sit with their parents/families, and be encouraged to play a full and active role on the Mass (singing, joining in with prayers etc).

During the Mass, the pupils from Y4 who will be preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion this year will also take part in a special Liturgy as part of their continued preparations, so it promises to be a truly uplifting and joyous celebration for all.

#### FIRST RECONCILIATION:

On Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November, 28 of our pupils, and 3 children from neighbouring schools, will be receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. We continue to pray for these children, and their families, on their Sacramental journey, and would like to offer an open invite for any member of our community who would like to come along for the special celebration. **Pupils must be in church, in full school uniform, and should be seated for 5:45pm.**

## LIGHTING UP WHICKHAM:

Please could all those intending to come along to the 'Lighting up Whickham' event return their reply slips to school by Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November. **Pupils in attendance must be accompanied by an adult.** Adults coming along should report to the Main School Office at around 3pm on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November. We will then walk en masse to Rose Villa Nursery for a 3:30pm start. The Christmas Tree lights, now at St Mary's Green (outside the Tesco Express store in Whickham village) will be switched on at around 4pm and the event will be finished at around 4:15pm.

## DIARY DATES (26.11.18 – 30.11.18)

TUESDAY –

Y1 Forest School session (pupils to come in to school in warm clothing with plenty of layers, waterproofs and outdoor shoes – please make sure all clothing is labelled).

Lighting up Whickham (pupils in attendance must be accompanied by an adult); meet 3pm at Main Entrance to school.

First Reconciliation service at St Mary's RC Church, 6pm.

WEDNESDAY –

Chatterbooks session 5/6.

THURSDAY –

Family Learning – Early Maths 4/5.

FRIDAY –

Last Gymnastics session of the Autumn Term.